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Message Text

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63
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AGR-10 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SP-02 /043 W
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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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PASS AGRICULTURE, FAS/MEEKER

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EAGR, UR
SUBJECT: USSR: AGRICULTURAL PLAN FULFILLMENT 1975

REF: AGR SS6004

1. GROSS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION DROPPED AGAIN IN 1975, TOTALING 90 BILLION RUBLES. THIS IS DOWN FROM 95.2 IN 1974 AND THE PEAK OF 97.9 BILLION IN 1973. EXCEPTIONALLY UNFAVORABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS, REPORTEDLY, RESULTED IN SHORTAGES OF GRAIN AND SOME OTHER PRODUCTS.

2. AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, CONTINUED AT HIGH LEVELS -- REACHING 31 BILLION RUBLES, A REPORTED NINE PERCENT INCREASE OVER 1974. IRRIGATION AND LAND RECLAMATION PROJECTS RECEIVED 15 PERCENT MORE CAPITAL IN 1975, OR 6.6 BILLION RUBLES. A TOTAL OF 73.2 MILLION TONS OF MINERAL FERTILIZER WAS DELIVERED FOR AGRICULTURAL USE, 9.4 MILLION MORE THAN IN 1974. THE CHANGE-OVER OF STATE FARMS TO THE FULL COST ACCOUNTING SYSTEM REPORTEDLY
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WAS COMPLETED DURING 1975.

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3. THE LONG-AWAITED FIGURE ON 1975 GRAIN PRODUCTION WAS ANNOUNCED AT 140 MILLION TONS -- UP FROM THE CALCULATED ESTIMATES RANGING BETWEEN 132-137 MILLION TONS. SUNFLOWER PRODUCTION WAS ANNOUNCED TO BE ONLY FIVE MILLION TONS, DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY FROM 1974'S CROP OF 6.8 AND THE PLAN OF 7.4 MILLION TONS. POTATO PRODUCTION TOTALED 88.5 MILLION TONS, BETTER THAN 1974'S 81 MILLION TONS, BUT BELOW THE PLANNED TARGET OF 109.8 MILLION TONS. COTTON PRODUCTION DROPPED TO 7.9 MILLION TONS FROM THE RECORD 8.4 MILLION IN 1974. FLAX PRODUCTION REACHED 478,000 TONS, WHILE VEGETABLE PRODUCTION REPORTEDLY WAS ABOUT EQUAL TO THE AVERAGE LEVEL OF THE NINTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN, WHICH WOULD PLACE 1975 PRODUCTION AT ABOUT 23 MILLION TONS. NO MENTION WAS MADE ABOUT 1975 SUGARBEET PRODUCTION, THE BREAKDOWN IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE VARIOUS GRAINS, OR THE LEVEL OF GRAIN AND OTHER CROP PROCUREMENTS.

4. THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR SHOWED INCREASES IN MEAT (FOUR PERCENT) AND EGG (FOUR PERCENT) PRODUCTION, BUT REDUCED MILK PRODUCTION IN 1975. TOTAL MEAT PRODUCTION REACHED 15.2 MILLION TONS (SLAUGHTER WEIGHT), BUT SHY OF THE PLANNED TARGET OF 15.3 MILLION TONS DESPITE INCREASED FALL SLAUGHTERING. EGG PRODUCTION REACHING 57.7 BILLION UNITS WAS WELL ABOVE THE PLAN CALLING FOR 55.8 BILLION EGGOS. REDUCED FEED SUPPLIES LIMITED MILK PRODUCTION TO 90.8 MILLION TONS, DOWN FROM 91.8 IN 1974 AND THE PLAN OF 94.8 MILLION TONS. WOOL PRODUCTION, REACHING 463,000 TONS, WAS APPROXIMATELY EQUAL TO THAT IN 1974. WE BELIEVE THAT PRODUCTION IN 1976 WILL APPROXIMATE THE PLAN OF 459,000 TONS, SOMEWHAT LOWER THAN PRODUCTION FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS, INSTEAD OF THAT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED IN REF. SS6004.

5. LIVESTOCK NUMBERS DURING 1975 DECLINED IN TWO OUT OF THREE CATEGORIES:

	JANUARY 1, 1975	JANUARY 1, 1976
	-----MILLION HEAD----------	
CATTLE,	109.1	111.0
OF WHICH COWS	41.9	41.9

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HOGS	72.3	57.8
SHEEP AND GOATS	151.2	146.9

SIGNIFICANTLY, CATTLE NUMBERS CONTINUE TO CLIMB FROM 109.1 MILLION HEAD ON JANUARY 1, 1975, TO 111.0 MILLION HEAD ON JANUARY 1, 1976. WHILE TOTAL CATTLE NUMBERS INCREASED, COW NUMBERS REAMINED STABLE AT 41.9 MILLION HEAD FOR BOTH TIME PERIODS. WE BELIEVE THIS CONFIRMS THEIR DECISION TO HOLD AND INCREASE CATTLE NUMBERS

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IN ORDER TO MEET 1976 PLANS AND SATISFY A RISING CONSUMER DEMAND FOR MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS. HOG NUMBERS DROPPED 20 PERCENT LATE IN THE YEAR, BECAUSE OF THE TIGHT GRAIN SITUATION. WE BELIEVE THIS DECREASE IN HOG NUMBERS COULD CONTINUE INTO EARLY SPRING. SHEEP AND GOAT NUMBERS DECLINED THREE PERCENT FROM THE JANUARY 1, 1975, LEVEL.

6. IN SPITE OF PRODUCTION STRAINS IN 1975, GOVERNMENT PURCHASES OF LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS INCREASED IN ALL THREE CATEGORIES. TOTAL PURCHASES OF MEAT INCREASED FROM 16.2 MILLION TONS (LIVE WEIGHT) IN 1974 TO 16.7 MILLION TONS IN 1975. (10.6 MILLION TONS AND 10.9 MILLION TONS SLAUGHTER WEIGHT, RESPECTIVELY). MILK PURCHASES INCREASED FROM 55.8 MILLION TONS IN 1974 TO 56.3 MILLION TONS IN 1975. EGG PURCHASES INCREASED FROM 30.9 BILLION UNITS TO 33.1 BILLION UNITS. THIS IS A FURTHER INDICATION OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE ITS CONSUMERS WITH A MORE PLENTIFUL SUPPLY OF BASIC CONSUMER ITEMS.

7. RETAIL TRADE IN GOVERNMENT AND COOPERATIVE STORES REACHED 208.9 BILLION RUBLES IN 1975, UP 13.7 BILLION RUBLES OVER 1974. DESPITE REDUCED BUTTER AND VEGETABLE OIL PRODUCTION IN 1975, RETAIL SALES REPORTEDLY WERE UP FOUR AND FIVE PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY. MEAT AND EGG SALES WERE UP SEVEN AND SIX PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY, WHILE THE SALES OF BREAD PRODUCTS WERE UP ONLY THREE PERCENT OVER 1974. MARGARINE AND WHOLE MILK PRODUCT SALES WERE UP THREE PERCENT, CHEESE SIX AND SUGAR FOUR PERCENT. WITH A BETTER POTATO CROP AND FEWER VEGETABLES, POTATO SALES WERE UP EIGHT PERCENT VERSUS A TWO PERCENT RISE FOR VEGETABLES.

8. LOOKING TOWARD 1976 GRAIN PRODUCTION, A TOTAL OF 36 MILLION HECTARES OF WINTER GRAINS REPORTEDLY WAS SOWN LAST FALL. ZERNOVOE KHOZYAYSTVO EARLIER REPORTED THAT 35.8 MILLION HECTARES WERE SOWN, 2.1 MILLION MORE THAN IN THE FALL OF 1974.
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THE CONDITION OF WINTER GRAINS, HOWEVER, WAS CONFIRMED BY THE SOVIETS TO BE WORSE THAN IN 1974, BECAUSE OF DRYNESS WHICH CONTINUED DURING THE AUTUMN GROWING PERIOD. THE SOVIETS ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE "MORE NORMAL" WINTER OF COLD WEATHER AND SNOW WILL LEAD TO BETTER WEATHER PATTERNS AND GREATER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN 1976. STOESSEL

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